

NATIONAL SEA GRANT ADVISORY BOARD
MEMBERSHIP BALANCE PLAN

(1) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE NAME

National Sea Grant Advisory Board

(2) AUTHORITY

The National Sea Grant Advisory Board (the “Board” hereinafter) was established by the Secretary of Commerce (hereinafter “Secretary”) as directed by the National Sea Grant Program Act of 1976, as amended, 33 U.S.C. § 1121et seq. (the “Act” hereinafter). The terms used in this charter shall have the same meaning as prescribed in the Act, as amended, including the term “Secretary,” which means the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere as defined by 33 U.S.C. § 1122(15) of the Act.

(3) MISSION/FUNCTION

The Board shall advise the Secretary and the Director, and meet with the Secretary of Commerce as appropriate on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in the Act. The Board should address issues appropriate for a Federal Advisory Committee serving the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP).

Topics the Board should address include: developing strategies for utilizing the NSGCP to address the Nation’s highest priorities regarding the understanding, assessment, development, management, utilization, and conservation of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources; the designation of Sea Grant colleges and Sea Grant institutes; and such other matters as the Secretary refers to the Board for review and advice. The Board shall report to Congress every 2 years on the state of the NSGCP. The Board shall indicate in each such report the progress made toward meeting the priorities identified in the strategic plan in effect under 33 U.S.C. § 1128(b)(2) of the Act. The Board may exercise such powers as are reasonably necessary in order to carry out its duties. The Board shall function as an advisory body in accordance with the FACA.

The term “Director” means the Director of the National Sea Grant College Program, appointed pursuant to 33 U.S.C. § 1122(D) of the Act.

(4) POINTS OF VIEW

Per the Act, the Board shall consist of 15 voting members who shall be appointed by the Secretary. The Director of a Sea Grant Program who is elected by the various directors of Sea Grant Programs shall serve as nonvoting members of the Board. Not less than eight of the voting members of the Board shall be individuals who, by reason of knowledge, experience, or training, are especially qualified in one or more of the

disciplines and fields included in marine science. The other voting members shall be individuals who, by reason of knowledge, experience, or training, are especially qualified in, or representative of, education, marine affairs and resource management, coastal management, extension services, State Government, industry, economics, planning, or any other activity which is appropriate to, and important for, any effort to enhance the understanding, assessment, development, management, utilization, or conservation of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources. No individual is eligible to be a voting member of the Board if the individual is (A) the director of a Sea Grant college or Sea Grant institute; (B) an applicant for, or beneficiary (as determined by the Secretary) of, any grant or contract; or a full-time officer or employee of the United States under 33 U.S.C. § 1128(c) of the Act.

(5) OTHER BALANCE FACTORS

In addition, the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) is mindful of the benefits of diversity in its board makeup including (but not limited to) diversity of geography, gender, ethnicity, and expertise. The NSGO must create a balanced Board while still remaining consistent with the Sea Grant authorizing legislation.

(6) CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

a) Process used to identify candidates and their professional qualifications

The NSGO publishes a Federal Register Notice (FRN) annually to solicit suggestions for potential nominees to the Board as required by law. The NSGO also uses various outreach efforts to ensure broad distribution and to seek a diverse pool of potential nominees. In addition to publishing the FRN, the NSGO sends a solicitation to current members of the Board, the Sea Grant directors, the Sea Grant network, and NSGO social networks. Furthermore, the NSGO works with the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Educational Partnership Program to advertise the solicitation for potential nominees to a more diverse group of candidates.

b) Identify the agency staff involved in determining balance on the Federal Advisory Committee

A NSGO staff review group (usually the Director, Deputy Director and Designated Federal Officer) reviews the candidates and develops recommended and alternate candidates for review by the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

(c) Briefly describe how Federal advisory committee vacancies, if any, are handled by the agency.

To facilitate the evaluation process, each member of the NSGO staff review group evaluates all potential nominees and categorizes them based on area(s) of expertise, sector, and geographic region represented. At the evaluation meeting, all candidates are discussed and evaluated further in the context of representation gaps due to turnover of

members as well as the needs of the Board, according to the following criteria: requirements of the Sea Grant authorizing legislation, representation of key stakeholder groups (e.g. commercial fishing, conservation, natural science, cultural, etc.), experience, geographic representation, sector representation (e.g. State Government, private, academia, Non-Governmental Organizations, etc.), expertise in marine management/conservation issues; leadership in marine management/conservation issues; and diversity characteristics.

d) State the membership term limit of Federal advisory committee members, if applicable.

The term of office of a voting member of the Board shall be 4 years as legislated by the Act. Any individual appointed to a partial or full term may be reappointed for one additional full term. The Director may extend the term of office of a voting member of the Board once by up to 1 year.

(7) SUBCOMMITTEE BALANCE

The NSGO staff review group and the Board discuss background and expertise needed for any subcommittee to ensure that balanced points of view are represented.

(8) OTHER

Appointments shall be made without discrimination on the basis of age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or cultural, religious, or socioeconomic status.

(9) DATE PREPARED/UPDATED

Updated May 2016

Reviewed: March 2014